

Abraham Lincoln papers

From A. Jackson et al. to Abraham Lincoln [With Endorsement by Lincoln]¹, October 3, 1863

1 On September 30 Lincoln met with a delegation of seventy Radical Unionists from Missouri headed by Charles D. Drake. This delegation had been appointed to lay before the President the demands of Missouri's radical element. Here a group of the delegation from Missouri's Third Congressional District lay before Lincoln their own bill of particulars against General John M. Schofield, the commander of the Department of Missouri. Lincoln's response to the entire delegation of October 5 is in this collection.

The members of the Delegation from the 3d Congressional District, ask to make the following statement of facts, as having occurred within the limits of that district, and which, though specific in character, tend to establish a general want of fitness, and ability in Genl Schofield² to discharge the duties of the important office of commander of the Department of Missouri—

2 Major General John M. Schofield was commander of the Department of Missouri.

First he is now, and has been for the last two years, a zealous partisan if of the political faction in Missouri, of which Govr Gamble³ is the acknowledged head — and also that he does not possess the confidence of a solitary unconditional union man in the District— In nine counties, some of them bordering on the state line of Arkansas, to wit, Scott, Madrid, Pemiscot, Dunklin, Stoddard, Butler, Ripley, Carter, and Wayne the Rebels, since June 1861, up to the present time, have had entire possession, and control— They have their own laws courts, and officers, and acknowledge no authority except the Confederate government

3 Hamilton R. Gamble

In 1862, while in command of the District of Missouri, Genl Schofield had ample means to restore the authority of the United States in this distracted section of country, and protect the union population, but he would not do it—

There was, in the early part of the spring of 1862 a regiment of Mo. State militia, raised, at the instance, too, of General Schofield, made up, in great part, of men who had to flee from these counties, for the express purpose of quelling the rebellion there, yet he never would permit that regiment to defend their own homes and families from the outrages of the rebel bands that infected this particular district—

The anomalous state of the country, and the perilous condition the union men there, were brought specially to the notice of General Schofield as commander of the District of Missouri; he answered in writing, "that he felt for the dangerous situation of the union men in South East Missouri, but that they must bear with their hardships, as best they could until the United States troops got out of the state, and then he would afford them protection— Well, this contingency transpired— Genl Steel⁴ crossed over into Arkansas, through South East Mo. taking with him all the U S troops— Genl Schofield was again applied to; it was represented to him that the union men were being hung, and shot, and robbed and driven off, and persecuted in every way still he refused the assistance he had promised, and the protection he had it in his power to bestow We present then, these specific charges against Genl Schofield while commanding the District of Missouri: that he refused to suppress the rebellion in South East Missouri when he had a force at his disposal sufficient for the purpose; that he refused to protect the union men of the District, and prevented the very force, raised and anxious to for the purpose, from affording that protection; that he knowingly, and wilfully permitted the secessionists, and rebels to band together and organize for the purpose of resisting the authority of the United States in South East Missouri; that he had a body of the Mo. State Militia in that vicinity sufficient to prevent this banding together and organizing, but he purposely, at the instance of Govr Gamble, made such disposition of these troops as to encourage and facilitate the rebels in organizing and arming for the purpose above stated— As commander of the District of Missouri Genl Schofield encouraged and approved of the policy of Govr Gamble of appointing to important military offices known rebels, and rebel sympathisers— He lent his influence and intrigued to have dismissed from office persons of acknowledged and tried ability and activity for no cause except their fidelity to the union and freedom— Capt Lindsey Murdock, Company A, 12th Regt Cav M. S. M was by a court martial, packed by Genl Schofield, found guilty of an inconsiderable charge, and dismissed the service— Genl Schofield maliciously approved the sentence, knowing the charge again was a frivolous one, made maliciously preferred, and knowing too the fact that Capt Murdock had, at the beginning of the rebellion been driven from his home, and, at his own expense raised a Rgt and commanded a Battalion of home guards for six months and been disbanded without pay, and then has raised, and been elected the captain, a company in the Mo State Militia, and assisted in raising several others in the same service, and no charges were ever brought against him his competency fidelity or patriotism—

4 Frederick Steele

He fostered and sustained the policy of Gov Gamble of non coercion and leniency to rebels— This is what has fostered and kept up to this day the marauding bands and Gurrillas in South East Mo — which, for the last two years, have laid waste that portion of the state whose outrages w he would

not interrupt while in command of the District, and still permits since he commands the Department of Missouri—

As proof of these outrages being still perpetrated, about eight weeks ago twelve soldiers, unarmed, returning from hospital to their companies at Bloomfield were every one murdered at hound Pond in Stoddard county— Within the last five weeks a band of Gurrillas from Stoddard, robbed the town of Charleston, in Mississippi county, of money and goods to the amount of several thousand dollars — The same band within a few days of the same time sacked the county seat of Wayne county, and burned every record and paper belonging to the county, and courts, carried off to the woods, and murdered, Capt John Whybark the United States enrolling officer for that county, for no other reason than that he was a United States officer

Washington Oct

the 3d 1863

A Jackson

P W A McPike

J T Robinson

W A Delano

Delegates from

3d Congrl District Mo

[Endorsed on Envelope by Lincoln:]

Drake — Gamble — Schofield — Missouri—